

First Congregational Church in Neosho, Mo., and it happened on August 12th of this year.

The events of that day startled the Nation, shocked the tight-knit town of Neosho, and devastated the small Micronesian community in the area from which the victims of these senseless and depraved acts of violence came. The shootings occurred during the early afternoon church services near downtown Neosho, with the first call for help coming at 1:54 p.m. Within minutes, officers from the Neosho Police Department, the Newton County Sheriff's Office and the Missouri Highway Patrol were on the scene and organizing a plan to put this nightmare to an end.

Officers arriving first were told a lone gunman had burst into the church and begun firing, severely injuring several people and possibly wounding a good deal more. The conditions of the victims were unknown. Several members of the congregation fled the church and the gunman ordered that other children take leave. But as many as 30 worshipers remained held at gunpoint at the moment the officers arrived.

Neosho Police Chief David McCracken, who was in charge at the scene, issued a command decision that would bring a quick and positive end to situation. Within minutes, McCracken had organized an impromptu team of experienced officers from three different agencies schooled in special weapons and tactics. After hearing another gunshot from inside the church, the seven-man team entered the sanctuary through a side door into the building.

Inside they found a 52-year-old man armed with two handguns—one of them pointed at the head of a female hostage. In a corner of the church, the gunman had gathered around 30 members of the congregation, and positioned them around him. Nearby lay three people mortally wounded, including two pastors and a deacon of the church, and five others clinging to life. As they entered the church, the gunman ordered the officers to leave. They told him to put down his weapon. And, perhaps recognizing his choice was either to comply with the demand or face a penalty similar to the one he imposed on his victims, he did just that.

In those tense moments, officers made it clear they intended to use deadly force to end the standoff. The confrontation with officers lasted less than 10 minutes. Eiken Elam Saimon gave up his handguns and was taken into custody. He has been charged with multiple offenses, including three counts of capital murder. Found inside the church were Micronesian-American pastor, Kernel Rehobson, 43; his uncle, Intenson Rehobson, 44; and Kuhpes Jesse Ikosia, 53.

Newton County Sheriff Ken Copeland said the quick action of the SWAT team saved lives, and I don't have any doubt that he's right. He believes, as I do, that many other residents and civic leaders in Newton County would have been lost without the team's rapid response and decisive decision-making.

Let me add special praise to Neosho Police Chief McCracken, who—as I mentioned—was the commanding officer on the scene. With shots still being heard inside the church, Chief McCracken acted without hesitation to lead the SWAT team in and bring to an end the armed threat, preventing the loss of additional life. Though the events leading up to this tragedy will forever be the object of speculation

and mystery, one thing we can be sure of is that having skilled officers and decisive leadership were essential to bringing a quick end to it.

These men willfully put themselves in the line of fire to rescue their friends and neighbors. The team led by Chief McCracken consisted of Neosho Police Officer Cameron Kruse and Cpl. Donn Hall, Newton County Sheriff's Chief Deputy Chris Jennings, Sgt. David Trimble and Deputy Dale Brashers and Trooper "Corky" Burr of the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

These are men of extraordinary valor, but several of their colleagues in the department are also worthy of mention as well. On March 16th of this year, Neosho City Police Sergeant Dan Cook tried to execute, what appeared at the time, a routine traffic stop. Unfortunately, the driver had a handgun ready and opened fire as Cook approached the car. Although Cook was hit in the arm, he returned to his vehicle and chased the assailant down for several miles. During the chase, one of his colleagues—Officer Michael Sharp—was wounded in the face. Another Missouri State Trooper, G. H. Hendrix, traded gunfire with the wanted man. Because of their determined pursuit, the man was later apprehended without further incident, arrested and booked on eight separate felony charges.

Each day our peace officers face these dangers and each day they confront the people who would do harm to law-abiding citizens. Each of these men is a dedicated public servant who knows how to do his job, and was not afraid to use his training and expertise to end the awful tragedies with which they were presented.

Facing a deranged gunman who has already shown the capacity to kill—and the willingness to kill some more—is a situation that requires cool heads and professional training. Not a single one of these law enforcement officers would call himself a hero. But here today, I will suggest that's exactly what they are.

To the praise already bestowed on them by the Governor, the state legislature, the Neosho City Council and county officials, I add a "well done and thank you" for your dedication to your profession and for putting your lives on the line in defense of your community.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

HON. DORIS O. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Ms. MATSUI. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce a resolution that is designed to give comfort to the millions of American families who struggle with prostate cancer.

September is National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. Because of the way prostate cancer affects our society, awareness is one of the most powerful tools we have to combat and defeat it. With this resolution, Congress has an opportunity to lend its voice to the communities, families, and individuals who are fighting to find a cure for an illness that kills more than 27,000 men every year.

It is easy to get caught up in statistics when talking about massive health challenges like

prostate cancer, and the numbers produced by this disease are indeed staggering. Over 200,000 men will be diagnosed in the United States this year. One in every six American males will have prostate cancer at some point during his life. Prostate cancer is the most common type of non-skin cancer in the country, and will kill approximately 27,000 men this year alone.

Twenty-seven thousand fewer husbands, fathers, uncles, best friends, and mentors because of prostate cancer, Madam Speaker. This is not a disease that we can afford to ignore.

Fortunately, we are not helpless in our fight against this killer. If caught early and treated correctly, prostate cancer can be managed and overcome. In fact, nearly all patients who identify that they have prostate cancer in its early stages survive and go on to live healthy adult lives.

The problem is that early-stage prostate cancer exhibits no symptoms. As a result, early and vigorous screening is absolutely critical for doctors to find the 27,000 American men who won't catch their prostate cancer early enough, and who will die as a result.

Screening will become an even more important part of our fight against prostate cancer as the baby boom generation comes of age. Males between the ages of 50 and 65 are particularly susceptible to prostate cancer, and this pool of men over 50 will only get larger in the near future. In today's United States, a man turns 50 years old about every fourteen seconds.

As a result, the aggregate risk to our society posed by prostate cancer will only rise as that huge swath of people born in the 1950s continues to age. Our fight against this killer will only become more challenging, Madam Speaker, even as we increase the quality of our screening, treatment, and research related to the disease.

That is why awareness will be so critical in the near future. The more people we make aware of the risks of prostate cancer, the better our chances of curing them before it is too late. National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month is a vital part of this mission. Every year in September, prostate cancer advocates, survivors, patients, and policy leaders heighten awareness of this disease. This is not just a feel-good exercise, Madam Speaker. It saves lives and keeps families together.

In many ways, the growth in Federal research spending into this disease can be traced to the positive effects and outreach of National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. A disease which once received \$86 million for research is now a \$466 million priority for medical researchers around the country. This huge success is due in large part to the tireless advocacy of the National Prostate Cancer Coalition, working with so many partners in support of National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month.

For the sixth year in a row, the United States Senate and the President have issued resolutions supporting National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. The House of Representatives has never joined them, Madam Speaker, until today.

With the resolution I now introduce with my colleague Mr. LATHAM of Iowa, the people's House will finally be on record supporting the worthy goals of National Prostate Cancer Awareness Month. Millions of American families around the country deserve the help of the

House of Representatives in their fight against this silent killer, and I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting this timely and overdue resolution.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I am writing regarding today's rollcall votes 865, H. Res. 257, supporting the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, and 866, H. Res. 643, recognizing September 11 as a day of remembrance, extending sympathies to those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and their families, honoring the heroic actions of our Nation's first responders and Armed Forces, and reaffirming the commitment to defending the people of the United States against any and all future challenges.

Please accept my apologies as I was meeting with constituents in my district and was not able to cast my votes tonight. It was my intention to vote "yes" on both resolutions.

HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF SAINT PHILOMENA SCHOOL

HON. JOE SESTAK

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Mr. SESTAK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Saint Philomena School for 100 years of educational excellence in Delaware County.

Located in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania, St. Philomena opened its doors on September 4, 1907, making it one of Delaware County's oldest Catholic schools. Since that time, the school has provided four generations of quality Catholic education, touching the hearts and minds of countless children, and epitomizing the school's motto, "Experience the Difference, Commit to the Future".

I would like to recognize the school's pastor, Monsignor David Benz, and principal, Ms. Patricia Walsh, for their service and impassioned dedication to educating the students of the Saint Philomena School.

I would also like to recognize and extend my gratitude to Ms. McKenna, an alumna of the school who has devoted 45 years to teaching, 30 of which were as the 8th grade teacher at St. Philomena School.

I ask that everyone join me in congratulating St. Philomena School on 100 years of great education, recognizing its contribution to the community, and acknowledging the dedication of its staff and administrators.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, unfortunately, I was unable to travel to Washington for votes.

However, I want you to know I would have recorded "yes" votes for these recorded votes. They included: (1) H. Res. 257—Supporting the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month, and; H. Res. 643—Recognizing September 11 as a day of remembrance, extending sympathies to those who lost their lives on September 11, 2001, and their families, honoring the heroic actions of our nation's first responders and Armed Forces, and reaffirming the commitment to defending the people of the United States against any and all future challenges.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE CLIFTON J. JEFFERSON

HON. JAMES E. CLYBURN

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former mayor, educator and businessman who dedicated his life to his hometown of Lynchburg, South Carolina. The town is dedicating a park in honor of the late Clifton J. Jefferson on October 6, 2007, and I believe it is fitting that the U.S. Congress honors his public service as well.

Clifton Jefferson was born in Lynchburg on September 10, 1923. Raised by his grandparents, John and Carrie Jefferson, Clifton attended Lynchburg public schools until he reached high school. At that time, he moved to Florence to attend Wilson High School, and upon graduation matriculated at South Carolina State College.

Clifton Jefferson didn't come from a wealthy family, and he had to perform odd jobs to help pay for school. But he had a tremendous work ethic and real rapport with his fellow students. They affectionately called him "Jeff," and elected him president of the Senior class at South Carolina State. He earned a bachelors degree in agriculture in 1946, and then decided to move to Baltimore, Maryland where he pursued further studies at Howard University, Morgan State, and the University of Maryland. At the time, Jeff helped integrate the University of Maryland as its first black student. He stayed on in Baltimore for eight years, but returned home when he was needed to care for his ailing grandmother.

Back at home in Lynchburg, Clifton Jefferson worked in the Lee County Public School System for 32 years. He began as a classroom teacher, became an assistant principal at Fleming Elementary and Mt. Pleasant High School, and went on to become principal of Bishopville Junior High School. He also held positions as assistant director of Lee County Vocational School, now known as the Lee County Career & Technology Center, and as coordinator of the Old Ceta Program, now Project ACT. All the while, he owned and operated Jefferson Funeral Home in Lynchburg.

Breaking color barriers was a common theme of Clifton Jefferson's life. He was elected the first black mayor of Lynchburg, and served his community for 16 consecutive years in that role. Some of his major accomplishments included integrating the Lee County sheriff's department, the county court house, and various agencies. He also brought the first Head Start program to Lynchburg.

During his tenure, Mayor Jefferson was instrumental in investing in his town's infrastruc-

ture by improving the water, sewer, and drainage systems, creating two parks, and increasing the number of town employees to provide services to the community. He also established the first Christmas parade and magnolia festival in Lynchburg.

Clifton Jefferson was an active member of Warren Chapel United Methodist Church, and held various positions on boards in Lee County and in South Carolina. His memberships included: the South Carolina Conference of Black Mayors, National Conference of Black Mayors, the World Conference of Black Mayors, South Carolina Municipal Association, Lee County Teachers Association, South Carolina Teachers Association, National Teachers Association, NAACP, Lee County Chapter of SC State Alumni, South Carolina Morticians Association, Florence Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity and the National Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity.

He was married to the former Gwendolyn Weaver, and the couple had six children, six grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, I ask you and all the members of this esteemed body to join me in recognizing the extraordinary work of Clifton J. Jefferson. I also commend the Town of Lynchburg for honoring their late mayor's great work by naming a park in his memory. This will serve as a lasting tribute to a gentle giant, who loved his hometown and succeeded in making it a better place.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PASADENA SYMPHONY ASSOCIATION

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 24, 2007

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the Pasadena Symphony, which will be celebrating its 80th anniversary on October 13, 2007—the beginning of the 2007–2008 season. Since 1928, the Pasadena Symphony has demonstrated musical talent, stable leadership, and remarkable service to the community.

In 1922, Will Rounds, Director of Instrumental Music in the Pasadena public school system and former member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, initiated a movement for a local civic orchestra. The Pasadena Civic Orchestra Association was officially developed in 1928 by a group of civic-minded citizens and Reginald Bland, the orchestra's first director. Originally formed to promote free music of all forms to the public and to provide young aspiring musicians an opportunity to train through practical experience, the orchestra has transformed from a group of volunteer and student musicians into a nationally-recognized orchestra that has won worldwide acclaim.

Much of the symphony's success can be attributed to its stable leadership. Since its founding, the orchestra has had only four music directors. In 1936, Dr. Richard Lert began his 36 year tenure as director and established a scholarship fund for students who performed in the orchestra. With Dr. Lert at the helm, the orchestra's name was changed to the Pasadena Symphony Association in 1954; in 1955, the symphony became a founding member of the Los Angeles Symphony